

Post acute care: How common are the patient assessment tools?

ISSUE: The Commission has long stated that Medicare payment policies in the post acute setting should focus on the patient, not the setting. To understand differences in the use of settings, the same information about the clinical characteristics and resource needs of the patients across all post acute settings is required. We will report on our initial comparisons of the patient assessment tools required by Medicare for use in home health agencies, skilled nursing facilities, and inpatient rehabilitation facilities.

KEY POINTS: We compared the aspects of care that are assessed, the definitions of the care, the time periods assessed, and the scales used by the tools. We found:

- Common information across the post acute sites is currently not available. Three of the four settings use different tools to assess patients, while one setting is not required to use a patient assessment tool.
- There are four common aspects of care examined by each of the tools: diagnoses, comorbidities, functional status, and cognitive status.

Key similarities and differences in the patient assessment tools will be presented at the meeting.

ACTION: No action is necessary at this meeting. We would like the Commissioners to discuss the general direction they would like staff to pursue.

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